

IN THE SPECIFICATION:

Please replace the paragraph beginning at page 15, line 24 with the following amended paragraph:

-- In step **804**, controller **102** estimates the number of sheet articles that can be removed from hopper **108** until level **200** is equal to predetermined level **206**. After determining when the level of the group of sheet articles is equal to the sensor measurement, the number of sheet articles required before reaching ~~measured level **204**~~ predetermined level **206** can be estimated if controller **102** is provided the following information: sheet article thickness (distance **a 216** shown in FIG. 2); and the distance between measured level **204** and predetermined level **206** (distance **b 218** shown in FIG. 4). As referred to herein, cycle is a sequence run by an insert station **112** or any other component of mail insertion system **100** that depletes one sheet article from hopper **108**, thereby reducing level **200** a distance equal to the thickness of one sheet article. Therefore, provided the number of cycles executed, the time when level **200** reaches predetermined level **206** can be determined. In this embodiment, sheet article thickness is calibrated by mail insertion system **100**. In one embodiment, the gripper arm can determine the thickness of the sheet article. In another embodiment, sheet article thickness can be provided to counter **114** through other suitable means known to those of skill in the art.